

Meeting notes for Extra Care National Forum

Date: 1 May 2025

Time: 4pm – 5pm

Chair of meeting: Ian Devereux

Attendees: **Housing 21 Representatives:** John Simmonds (JS) Resident Engagement and Experience Manager; Kris Peach (KP) Managing Director of Extra Care; Vanessa Pritchard-Wilkes (VPW) Head of Research & Influence; Jo Osborn, Extra Care Coordinator taking the minutes.

Housing 21 residents: x11 Resident Attendees

Title of agenda item		Summary of discussion	Actions agreed including assignments and deadlines
1.	Introductions	*JS explained that the meeting will be recorded. The recording will be circulated to the Managers in Extra Care.	
2.	Actions From Last Meeting	<i>ID provided an update as follows:</i> In the previous forum, a discussion was held regarding raising the profile of Extra Care and what it's all about. ID spoke about an open day that was held at his Court, he has since done a write up about the open day which has now gone off for publication. ID is looking to get it circulated more widely. ID reminded the group of how successful the open day was in bringing the local community together and raising the profile of Extra Care, they are now looking to make this an annual event.	
3.	The Approach to Resident Engagement	KP introduced himself and explained that he & VPW were in attendance to talk to the group about resident engagement and some changes around that, and to get the groups thoughts and feedback on that.	

		<p>VPW explained that up until two weeks ago she was Head of Strategic Operations Team where resident engagement, and a number of other functions sat. VPW has now moved over and is now the Head of Research and Influence. VPW has moved out of operations and is back reporting to the Chief Executive.</p> <p>Part of the changes that have occurred is that VPW has taken the research function with her, as well as some other posts which she will go to explain.</p> <p>VPW spoke about some other changes in the team, there is a proposal that the Strategic Operations Team, which was a central support team, will be split between Retirement Living and Extra Care so that both business streams have their dedicated resources in terms of resident engagement, complaints, ASB, complex needs support etc. Essentially two separate teams. At present Housing 21 have one person, JS, looking after resident engagement, we are looking to replace that one person with two dedicated people on resident engagement - one in Extra Care, one in Retirement Living.</p> <p>VPW is aware that some concerns have been raised about losing the bigger picture when that happens, and perhaps the focus will be on those business streams as opposed to Housing 21 overall. VPW and KP have been having discussions about this and have come up with a proposal to present to the group.</p> <p>Under the new complaints handling code, there is a member responsible for complaints, Richard Dell, who sits on the board, he is a resident board member. Meetings will be set up with him to talk about complaints so that he has a really thorough understanding to go back to board, to really question the information and to get assurance on all of that, VPW and KP have been talking about extending that, so rather than just have that, Ian and Mick can be included as the residents on the committees, and have more of the performance Scrutiny Group. We can</p>	
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		<p>come to you and bring our performance in all those areas that we've seen a focus on – repairs, value for money, complaints, all of the performance indicators. In addition, there will be a role looking at the external environment, external stakeholder engagement and consultations.</p> <p>It is early days, but it feels like a positive move forward for us.</p> <p>KP said the two new roles will support resident engagement more widely and will be focusing on communication and how we can improve that. We will be creating a wider team around resident engagement, which will help us to progress in some of the areas where we need to progress. We will be drawing up more of a proposal for you to have a look at and come back to us. We thought we'd talk you through it before we did that to get your views on what you think about resident engagement and the support that you need as a wider forum.</p> <p>ID expressed a concern that by bringing these changes in now, it will result in a loss in momentum. ID asked what the timescales for the changes / new roles are.</p> <p>KP explained that the changes are underway now. There have been some changes already in terms of changing some of those teams.</p> <p>VPW is currently writing job descriptions to prepare for recruitment and estimates that advertising the roles will happen in 2-3 weeks, and then the interviews but we need to bear in mind peoples notice periods.</p> <p>KP asked ID what his concerns were, ID explained the struggles faced getting members to join / attend the forum, ID feels we are at a stage where we want to ramp up the efforts to recruit new members and feels that the changes will cause a delay whilst recruitment is taking place.</p>	
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		<p>KP reassured that there would be no reason anything would need to be put on hold. There will be no less people for the next few months whilst the changes are underway.</p> <p>VPW added that we can utilise Lucy Nixon, Residents Communication Manager. Lucy comes with a lot of experience and innovative ideas.</p> <p>TL agreed with KP, although does feel that focus may be lost because to delays in new employees starting due to lengthy notice periods, TL feels that realistically the process will take 5-6 months, in which time we may completely lose the focus that we've gained over the last 12 months, especially with the push to gain new forum members.</p> <p>KP suggested targeted campaign to support with that, we could start the ball rolling with that now with support from the Marketing Team, and Operational Teams.</p> <p>Ac couple of suggestions were made regarding getting other residents interested in the forum:</p> <p>DD made a suggestion that each forum member bring along another resident from their court to the next forum, as some residents may be nervous to join as they don't not know what is expected of them or how much they are expected to contribute, but by sitting in they can gain an understanding of how the forums work, without the pressure of feeling that they have to contribute if they don't wish too.</p> <p>AG introduced herself as a resident in a Retirement Living property. AG recently had a meeting with the manager, one of the things that was suggested, because engagement on the court is poor, was to have meetings like this in the communal lounge, that way it would that open up for people actually to see what the group entails.</p> <p>It was agreed that this was a promising idea, although some Courts may have difficulties due to Wi-Fi /</p>	
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	<p>technical difficulties, and lack of engagement for other residents.</p> <p>ID thanked KP & VPW for their offer of support, but feels that the support needs to be ongoing, someone who can follow up on invitations, who can be a like a secretary to the engagement groups.</p> <p>KP said that would be an admin support role for the forums, rather than the Resident Engagement lead. KP said that this can be investigated but cannot make any promises.</p> <p>ID would like a clear understanding of the structure envisioned for engagement moving forwards.</p> <p>KP said that is something that he & VPW are working on - to set that structure out and then give an idea of what that structure looks like, and how it will support, how it engages, and where the forum sits in that.</p> <p>There is also the new resident engagement loop which is now up and running and starting to feedback on, that can be pulled together and presented back.</p> <p>VPW feels this could be pulled together relatively quickly and suggested setting another meeting up within this group to ensure that the forum members have site of it. VPW thinks a week and a half will be sufficient to get something together, it may not be the fully fledged, but it will be a starting point.</p> <p>ID said with regards to what the forum members can do from their point of view, he will start a list together and get that circulated out by the middle of next week.</p> <p>VPW asked if ID would share that with her too, then she can work with KP and hopefully someone else to start to model out what is being proposed, what that looks like, how that will link to the other forums, resident engagement activities, etc. and bring that back before the next meeting so that it can be discussed in more detail.</p> <p>KP said that they will come up with an idea in terms of taking it on to the next level, it has always been about</p>	
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		<p>how we can enhance this group and the impact it has, we wouldn't want to lose sight of that. KP said he values his time at the forum, and the direct feedback that it gives him every month.</p> <p>This forum wasn't that established not that long ago, it has come a long way in a short space of time, we need to keep sight of that. It's an important group that is in a much better place by having a group of residents that are informing, and talking, and helping Housing 21 to get better and do things differently.</p> <p>DB wanted to speak about the Extra Care strategy, and said that whilst it seems very positive, it doesn't seem to be happening on the ground quite like that, there have been quite a lot of recent residents who are not able to live independently and have required a significant increase in the number of carers, which can result in comments such as <i>"we didn't buy into being part of a care home"</i></p> <p>It is something that is concerning for a lot of residents because they're seeing potentially the value of their share of the properties going down because people won't want to buy a property as it can be disruptive and it's not the same place it was when they moved in at the outset, whether that is a trend that is being promoted centrally, or whether that is a local decision on the basis of hitting targets, fulfilling voids and getting the money on the care side.</p> <p>ID said that unfortunately, it is driven by the local authorities and that was partly why the open day was held, to try and start to address that.</p> <p>KP said what we've committed to this year is doing some value proposition work and some research in terms of being a little bit clearer in our offers, both Retirement Living and for Extra Care.</p> <p>We also talked about complex needs, and what we're seeing in our schemes. The question KP has put back to the committee is, is there more work we can do on nominations and guidance to managers and different things. It's a concern for lots of residents, it's definitely</p>	
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		in the strategy to do something about, then we can start to address things on the ground if that's what's needed.	
4.	AOB	JS reminded that there are a number of standing items that are normally on the agenda, but this was a single topic meeting. JS will send an update round about any AOB or actions that have advanced since the last forum when he circulates the minutes.	

Date of next meeting: Thursday 26th June

Time of next meeting: 13:00-14:00